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**CENTRAL REGIONAL COUNCIL ON WORKFORCE SERVICES**  
**Department of Workforce Services**  
**1385 South State Street, Salt Lake City, Utah 84115**  
**Monthly Meeting Minutes**  
**Thursday, March 23, 2006**  
**12:30 p.m.**

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Presiding: Greg Diven, Chair

Present: LaRay Brown, Charles Daud, Aida Castrillo, Linda Fife, Norm Fitzgerald, Stephanie Frohman, Senator Brent Goodfellow, Tony Gomez, John Hill, Paul Jackson, Parley Jacobs, Commissioner Colleen Johnson, Doug Johnston, Nancy Malecker Jill Merritt, Akilah Messado, Jon Pierpont, Steve Rosenberg, Kevin Schofield, Karen Silver, Kerry Steadman, Russ Thelin

Absent: Kent Anderson, Allan Ayoub, Ben Graham, Louie Silveira, Melva Sine, Julie Zimmerman

Excused: Ron Andersen, Jennifer Carroll, Dr. Stephen Ronnenkamp, Susan Smith, M. Ali Wilkinson

Guests: Colleen Fraser – Economic Development Corporation, Mike Richardson, James Robson, Gordon Swensen

Staff: Rod Barlow, Brent Fife, Steve Leyba, Diane Lovell, Laurel Morris, Mary Peterson, Yvette Woodland

**Call to Order, Announcements & Opening Business**

Chairman Greg Diven called the meeting to order at 12:35 pm. He began by recognizing and congratulating the following individuals/companies who serve on the Central Region Council:

- L-3 Communications (John Hill) was recognized at the Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) for the *2005 Major Manufacturer of the Year*.
- Staker & Parson (Ben Graham) was recognized at the MEP for *Environmental Consciousness*.
- Tony Gomez was recognized as *Volunteer of the Year by Chamber West*.
- Stephanie Frohman was on the cover of the February Utah Business Magazine featuring *Rising Stars Under 40*.

Mr. Diven also provided all in attendance with a copy of *Trendlines* magazine, a publication of the Utah Department of Workforce Services.

Chairman Diven made mention of the special Governors Summit on the possible bird flu pandemic that will be held at the Davis County Convention Center. This event is open to major employers in Utah. Mr. Diven has information to register on line for this event.

Currently there are over 400 signed up with a capacity of 500. IHC and Zion's Bank, both represented on the Central Region Council, are involved.

Brent Fife, Manager of the Central Region Eligibility Service Center (CRESC) provided highlights regarding this center. CRESC is home to approximately 150 staff, 10 eligibility teams, an imaging team, the Central Region Training Center and a few other out-stationed staff from the department.

Mr. Fife provided a handout detailing additional information regarding Workload, the Training Center and Telecommuting. Phase I of the Telecommuting Pilot began in October 2004 with 10 staff. The success of the pilot led to an increase in telecommuting participants. Immediate benefits to the pilot include:

- Increased worker productivity
- Less use of sick leave
- A reduction in turnover and retention in experience
- Zero adverse impact on accuracy and timeliness

### **1. Consent Agenda**

**Chairman Diven asked for a motion to approve the February 23, 2006 Regional Council Meeting and the March 9, 2006 Executive Committee Meeting Minutes. Karen Silver moved to accept the minutes as written with one correction to the spelling of Parley Hellewell on page 8. Norm Fitzgerald seconded the motion. All voted "Aye". The motion carried.**

### **2. Regional Director's Report – Jon Pierpont**

Jon Pierpont provided a handout on Family Employment Program (FEP) participation rates. He indicated that a primary department goal is to increase the overall FEP participation rate and staff has been focusing on involving customers in activities that count toward participation. The handout highlighted increases in the participation rate from July 2005 through February 2006. Mr. Pierpont also noted that more work needs to be done to meet the department's 50% target.

Mr. Pierpont also discussed the Key Characteristics of Central Region Participants for the Family Employment Program highlighting those with the highest percentage in each of the following categories:

- |                         |                        |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| • Household Size        | • Child Care Payments  |
| • Children              | • Average Grant        |
| • Age of Youngest Child | • Earned Income        |
| • Age                   | • Unearned Income      |
| • Ethnic Class          | • Child Support        |
| • Sex                   | • Food Stamp Cases     |
| • Pregnancy Allowance   | • Total Average Income |
| • Second Parent Status  |                        |

Mr. Pierpont stressed the importance of Worksite Learning and that it is an essential element for families in these types of situations. He encouraged Council members to

refer interested employers and indicated that Laurel Morris and her staff would be happy to meet with referred employers in support of this effort.

Karen Silver again stated that Worksite Learning should be available in Elementary Schools. She indicated that she plans to personally visit each school district to promote this action.

Jon Pierpont also highlighted areas of the FEP Employment Plan Services that need to be watched closely. These include:

- Mental Health Treatments
- Physical Treatment
- Domestic Violence noting that during the period of March 2005 through March, 2006, 571 FEP customers reported issues with domestic violence. It is estimated that 48% of FEP customers have been victimized in domestic violence situations.
- Problem Solving Assessments

Mr. Pierpont indicated that he and Russ Thelin are working to help DWS Clinical Therapists and Office Rehabilitation Counselors better understand the FEP participation requirements and eligible activities.

Jon Pierpont also reported that a successful Job Fair was held at the Miller Motor Sports Park in Tooele on March 9<sup>th</sup>. Miller Sports Park representatives indicated that they plan to hire 130 -150 of the 257 job seekers who attended.

Jon Pierpont reported that a Second Chance Employment and Information Fair to serve ex-offenders was held on March 21st at the Salt Lake County Complex. Eighteen employers, 12 community service providers and over 200 ex-offenders participated. The number of job hires will be tracked and shared with the Council at a later date. Laurel Morris acknowledged Edie Fauver and Salt Lake County Aging Services and expressed appreciation for their support and involvement in the Second Chance Employment and Information Fair.

Jon Pierpont then reported that another Second Chance Job Fair is scheduled in Tooele on April 25<sup>th</sup> and closed his remarks by announcing plans for a WorkAbility Job Fair on April 4<sup>th</sup> that will be co-sponsored by the Office of Rehabilitation.

Greg Diven reemphasized the Council's commitment for each member to speak with a minimum of two employers about Worksite Learning. Laurel Morris agreed to provide the Council with a list of current employers participating in Worksite Learning.

Jill Merritt asked about the status of the Basic Work Skills (Workplace Essentials) course. Jon Pierpont indicated that the course is being offered at the Skills Center and customer referrals are made after individuals have been determined "job ready" by their Employment Counselors.

### **3. Retreat Plans – Greg Diven**

Chairman Diven referred to the draft agenda – noting that the Retreat will begin at 8:30 am on April 27, 2006. He indicated that Executive Director, Tani Downing has confirmed and will be a featured presenter. In addition, he mentioned that the “dress” will be casual and Levi’s are acceptable. Commissioner Colleen Johnson provided a map with directions to the Firefighters Museum along with a Tooele County promotional brochure. Mr. Diven reminded everyone to read Dr. Quinn McKay’s book prior to the Retreat.

Awards of recognition will be given at the Retreat to one council member, one employer, one youth and one adult customer. The Executive Committee will review nominations and make final decisions at the April 13 meeting. Chairman Diven thanked Charles Daud for heading up the nomination and awardee selection process.

Mr. Daud asked that nominations for the Council member recognition award be emailed to him.

### **4. Diversity Committee Structure & Recommendations – Greg Diven**

The Diversity Committee is fully functioning with Tony Gomez as Chair. Other members include: Aida Castrillo, Kevin Schofield, Kerry Steadman and Susan Smith. Notes from the first meeting were included in the Agenda packet and the following topics were discussed:

- Diversity Committee Purpose
- Council member suggestions and recommendations
- Resources and Potential Committee Members
- Committee Objectives
- Regional Priorities per Jon Pierpont, Regional Director

Tony Gomez reported on the Diversity Committee meeting held today (Mar. 23), and noted that there are many areas to work on. Action items for initial focus are:

- Working with the Somali-Bantu refugees by starting to educate employers that many refugees have work skills and may be excellent job candidates.
- Work in partnership with the LDS Church to put together programs to help the Somali/Bantu refugees find employment.

Another issue touched upon was that the Somali-Bantus don’t necessarily meet Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) eligibility requirements and that this situation needs to be looked into further.

Chairman Diven thanked Tony Gomez and the Diversity Committee for their efforts.

### **5. Committee Reports & 2007 Strategic Plan Updates**

Greg Diven reported that beginning in May, one committee will present their goals, action steps, progress, challenges and upcoming plans during each monthly Council meetings. Mr. Gomez agreed that the Diversity Committee would present in May. Mr.

Diven asked that each committee advise him of the month they would like to make a formal presentation to the Council.

Basic Needs – Karen Silver reported on the Basic Needs Committee’s two goals.

- 1) One is **transportation**. The plan is to review the information from the latest UTA Public Hearing about the bus routes and find out if the criteria are used consistently in determining bus routes.
- 2) The second goal is **literacy**. The Committee will work with the Diversity Committee to map out sites where literacy classes are being held to determine if non-English speaking populations can access the classes via public transit.

Ms. Silver also noted that President Bush has “zeroed out” training programs in his 2007 budget and plans to replace the current process with personal training accounts. Paul Jackson referred to an article in the Workforce Management Magazine, March 13<sup>th</sup> issue that discusses this change. Copies of the article were distributed to Council members.

Training & Development – Linda Fife reported that the Training and Development Committee’s functional description will be modified after committee members have had an opportunity to provide input. The committee’s goals include:

- 1) Using the information from the Roundtables to improve training and workforce outcomes.
- 2) Assessing training demand and ensuring an adequate supply of providers
- 3) Regarding apprenticeships, Worksite Learning and OJT, the committee will compile information periodically and provide updates to the Council
- 4) Continue to compare various elements of all training programs. Elements include but aren’t limited to tuition, starting wages, placement rates and market demand.

Youth Council - Paul Jackson reported the Youth Council has four sub-committees that will be discussing and working on the following goals during the Retreat:

- 1) Sponsor an Alternative Education Resource Fair for both providers and participants
- 2) How to better target services to refugee youth
- 3) Develop strategies to promote the JustForYouth website
- 4) Align more closely with the Executive Roundtables.

Executive Committee - Chairman Diven reported that the Executive Committee agreed to the following four preliminary goals:

- 1) Have at least one of the Central Regional Council’s initiatives adopted by the State Council. Share initiatives taken on by the Regional Council that would benefit the State Council, i.e., the Roundtables.
- 2) Enhance and improve issues related to Worksite Learning such as transportation.
- 3) Respond to and support DWS Regional goals once they are identified.
- 4) Identify and pursue implementation of changes to customer based needs.

## **6. Executive Roundtable**

Chairman Diven provided a progress report on the Automotive and Construction Roundtables. The initial Executive Roundtable goals include:

- 1) Automotive Roundtable – Seat two sub-committees; one to work on curriculum issues and the other to promote the need for applied courses to count toward graduation credit.
- 2) Conduct a Construction Roundtable – March 28, 2006 will be the first roundtable for the Construction industry. John Hill will conduct the roundtable and 32 companies have confirmed their attendance.

Mr. Diven asked Parley Jacobs to update the Council regarding the curriculum development effort. Mr. Jacobs noted that aligning higher education with public education curricula is more complicated than originally thought. With industry support, the Applied Technology College (SLTATC), Salt Lake Community College (SLCC) and public education have agreed to work on developing a “seamless” curriculum for automotive technicians and diesel mechanics.

Mr. Jacobs reported that assignments have been made and various teachers have met to put together their platforms and concerns/issues regarding the differences between the two or three entities’ automotive programs. Another meeting will be held with SLCC, SLTATC and public schools in a smaller setting with administrators and select teachers to distribute assignments to work in the curriculum mapping, recruiting wages, internships and the applied course graduation credit issue. Mr. Jacobs feels that everyone is committed to making this work.

Chairman Diven thanked Parley Jacobs and Linda Fife for their efforts and announced that a region-wide curriculum development meeting is scheduled on April 28<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Diven stated that it is not an easy undertaking and feels through the dedication and efforts of all involved, “We can make this happen.”

Lastly, Chairman Diven shared that on March 15, he and Steve Maas met with the North Region Council in Logan to help them initiate an Employer Roundtable effort.

## **7. 2006 Legislative Session – Impacts for DWS – Mike Richardson**

The 2006 Legislative Session has concluded and Mike Richardson provided an update and a handout summarizing the following budget requests:

- General Assistance Program - \$5M one-time and .5M ongoing
- Food Stamp Program - \$945,200
- Child Care Program - \$2,702,400
- eRep Project - \$4,085,000

Mr. Richardson concluded that overall the outcome was very positive. He then announced that he would be meeting with the Governor’s Rural Partnership Board on April 19<sup>th</sup>. He asked that if employers on the Council had human capital issues in rural areas, to let him know. He would be glad to share them with the Partnership Board on April 19.

### **8. LMI Update and Regional Economic Forecast – James Robson**

James Robson shared statistics on Tooele County Employment growth and noted that much of the growth is contributed to the new Walmart Distribution Center. Mr. Robson provided a handout and noted that the outlook for Tooele's economy is very positive.

Mr. Robson also distributed a copy of the DWS Quarterly Newsletter "Workforce News".

Karen Silver asked how we are doing in breaking down the growth in jobs by gender and ethnicity. Mr. Robson noted that we have a more positive picture upcoming but this information has to do with a census program called the American Community Survey. Currently we have data for the very large counties - Salt Lake, Weber and Davis. Towards the end of 2006 some of the next tier of counties will start to get information and within approximately four years, we will have this data for all counties in the state regardless of size.

Chairman Diven thanked Mr. Robson for his presentation and commented that Mr. Robson would be available for additional questions during the April 27 Retreat.

### **9. Old Business**

There was no old business to discuss.

### **10. New Business**

There was no new business.

### **11. Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

Chairman Diven adjourned the meeting at 2:10 pm.